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THE OLD SQUIRE.

From some reason or other, the last age seems as far removed out of all remembrance, and as completely sunk back into the great gulf of the historic past, as the days of Henry VIII., of Caesar, or of Alexander. There never could have been so wide a chasm between one age and another, as between this and the last. We appear to have no connection with it, except upon some very old-fashioned and out-of-the-way occasions; and it is, moreover, our pride to disown and laugh at its pretensions. Every custom and convenience of that time, if adopted now, would subject a man to the pity or the laughter of his next-door neighbour. There is a reason, or many reasons, doubtless, for all this; and the first, and captain of them all is, unquestionably, the great advance which has been made in the sciences and arts, and especially in their practical application to the uses of our everyday life. Thereby our habits have been completely revolutionised, and our old associations cut off; inasmuch that we do almost nothing now in the manner of our forefathers of the last century. This revolution has entered into every household; it regulates our going out and our coming in; and what is its especial charm and pledge of an abiding benefit, and shews it to be something more than the fervid bloom which precedes decay is, that it has not given more of refinement and luxury to the rich than it has given of convenience and amelioration to the poor. Amid the vastly accumulating utilities, however, of such a period, we need both shrewd wits and well-balanced judgments to steer us safe from that moral debility and enervation of character, whereunto prosperity has so often proved but a prelude, both in nations and individuals.

Despite, however, our superiority in comfort and convenience, there are many things, characters, and customs of the old days, passed or passing for ever away, upon which we love to meditate, and which we would fain fuse into our new habits and institutions. But things change so fast, and the old folk and old customs are dwindled to so small a bulk, that we shall soon lack a pattern. It seems so long, so very long and out of all memory, since the glorious era of stage-coaches, that a person who has actually travelled in one to London, would have some difficulty in obtaining credit for the fact. Then to talk of queues and rapiers as having been the adornments, not only of the gallants, but of all sober men, so recently as some sixty years ago, would appear preposterous, seeing we esteem such things as completely out of all reckoning, as if they had been laid aside ever since the

days of Absalom, who was a gentleman as proud of the one as he was quick to handle the other. Now, it is this observation of the great change which all things and persons are undergoing, that makes us anxious to gather up whatever lineament of the departed age has not yet become entirely obliterated, so that we may not be altogether dependent upon the labours of the antiquary, or the fancy of the novelist, for a picture of our immediate forefathers. To subserve this purpose, we have begged of our worthy Old Squire, one of the last, we fear, of his race, that he will sit for his portrait.

Truly, a most rare person is a pure Old Squire, come of the ancient stock, and possessing the old Hall, with all its demesne free and intact, as it was possessed by his forefathers for countless generations. The race has been dwindling away for ages, as the many desolate old Halls, with their heraldic bearings over the door, their forsaken courtyard, and the ruined gateway, remain to testify. We can count half-a-dozen or more of those venerable relics of the past within a circuit of a few miles. There is not a parish but has its ancient Hall; but, alas! where is the Squire, his hounds, his horses, his goodly pedigree, that could boast a man at Crecy or Agincourt, that waxed or waned with the fortunes of the Roses, and that was ever to be depended upon when England had hard blows to deal, or heroic acts to achieve? The Hall is dismantled and untenanted, or become a melancholy farmhouse, and the family-name remembered only upon some monumental-tablet in the chancel of the parish-church.

The Old Squire hath none of the Norman noble about him; we question if he has a drop of Norman blood in his veins: he is pure Saxon, come of the yeoman-stock of Old England; in proof whereof, as some would say, and of that number the Norman William of Malmesbury, is his reputation as a hard drinker and substantial feaster. Such a reputation might once have been well merited, if we may believe Fielding and our modern novel-writers, both small and great, who delight to represent our Old Squire's ancestors as most rude, untoward men—all whose exploits were in matters of drinking, foxing, shooting—and, of later times, electioneering; in which last they seem to have been notorious, as well for the half-dozen votes they could immediately command, as for the good home-brewed wherewith they could cheer the honest heart of England's incorruptible franchise. We will not, however, believe that this was their general character. There are few such come down to our day; and the gentleman who now sits for his portrait, can both drink with temperance and feast

with moderation; and besides his love of the chase, and his being a good shot, he is, moreover, a justice of the peace, and colonel of the county yeomanry.

A hale and honest-hearted man is the Squire, despite his reluctance to acquiesce in the advance of the times, his ill-concealed chagrin at the levelling of ranks, and his hearty love for the sweet command and the devoted attachment of his old feudality. We call these things his prejudices and antiquated notions; and yet it would in him be superhuman not to possess them. We must consider him as having been educated under all the exclusive notions of the last century—the pride of family, the honour attached to all ancient proprietors of land, the repugnance to 'new men,' and the abject deference exacted of the poor, who were, and still are in some cases, treated as an inferior order of men, born to administer to the luxuries of the few, and counted as having no interest of their own beyond what a miserable shift at existence was enough to satisfy. To this last and worst, we must make exception on behalf of the Old Squire; for never was man more generous and affable to the poor of his own parish, so they knew how to keep their proper places, refrained from poaching, and never came before him in his capacity of justice of the peace. Educated, however, under the domination of such ideas, and accustomed to move in an atmosphere serene and untroubled, wherein dignity was his habitual clothing, and reverence flattered his presence among men—under such circumstances, we may not wonder if the Old Squire had at first a most bitter disrelish to such a thing as a railway-carriage, into which the village blacksmith or tailor had as much right to mount, so he paid his fare, as the Squire himself. This, in his estimation, was a blow at the very roots of society, and a certain omen that one day the aforesaid smith or tailor would elbow the Squire, honest man, out of his old arm-chair, wherein his ancestors had sat for generations. Besides, railways were most impudent things; taking immense liberties, and coming, with all their worldly uproar, into far too great familiarity with a gentleman's private grounds. This was a direct infringement of the liberties of the subject, for was not the Squire lord of his own demesne? How could an act of parliament, or forty acts of parliament, presume to appropriate his land? The land, however, was appropriated; and the railway came, thrusting its great parallels right through the most beautiful scenery, and within but one short mile of the Old Hall itself. The Squire was mortified beyond measure, and held most wonderful sympathy and condescension with the drunken old coachman who drove the *Royal Swan*, but was now cast aside without any pension or warning. Many persons in the Squire's position would have threatened to sell off, and emigrate; but this the Squire had not the heart even to hint at. He is a native plant, and can thrive nowhere else; besides that, he hates every country under the sun, except his dear Old England. But the Squire is an easy-minded man—given, indeed, to a little passion at times, yet never retaining it long; and so, as no better could now be done, he began to think of resignation, although it is certain that he has reserved to himself the right of prophesying, on all proper occasions, the ruin of his country.

But railways were not the only evil of our improvements. Not satisfied with perplexing the soil, and casting disparagement upon all ancient modes

of conveyance, whether of persons or goods, we must needs seek more direct means to annoy honest folk, and unsettle the minds of the people. We thought the people must be better educated. Now, the Squire is no great orator, but he has many times discoursed, both to himself and others, in no measured terms upon this matter. He thinks the people possessed of a vastly greater amount of knowledge than is good for them, and that it serves only to make them discontented with their calling, and disrespectful to their betters. He looks upon any measure of national education as a direct effort to teach the people to pick and steal, to poach and read bad books, to become rebels and atheists. In proof thereof, he says the magistrates had never so much business as they have now; having in the old times had hardly anything to do, and having never held a meeting except when some respectable robbery or murder had been committed. The Squire does not, of course, reckon that the increase of population may have something to do with this, seeing he scarcely knows thereof, hating, as he does, our inquisitorial statistics. With respect to the Census, his indignation knows no bounds; that therein his venerable head should be reckoned in common with every clown's pate; and that in the number of the parish, he should count but one. This is beyond all bearing, and perverts the very first principles and axioms of his old arithmetic. But it is of no use; we live in a stubborn age; the Census is taken, and education is furthered. The movement got so bold amongst us once, that it was publicly whispered at the smithy, that there was going to be a Mechanics' Institute. It went even so far as to name the tailor for secretary, and a little Radical, who farms two fields and keeps a cow, as treasurer. But no sooner did this come to the ears of the Squire, through the forward wagging of some tale-bearing tongue, than he flew into a most violent choler, and the whole village became stricken with terror. Some old women even hinted that the yeomanry would be called out, and the village proclaimed in a state of siege, for they never had seen the Squire so much beside himself before—not even the winter wherein his pheasants were so much poached. In good sooth, he was sorely annoyed: he looked upon it as rebellion, defying him to his face; and it is even said, that he took down *Burns's Justice*, to try if happily he might find there some old statute empowering him to stop such a proceeding. Then, for a tailor to become a secretary! He would be aiming at the dignity of a Squire next. And as for that miserable body of a Radical to set himself up for a treasurer! He had taken too much at his hands already, and only waited for a decent opportunity to bring him before his betters, and have him transported—a thing which he confidently prophesied would come to pass some day. Such a creature, he had long thought, was not to be tolerated in an honest community; for his opinions were a compound of blasphemy and rebellion—even going so far as to maintain that the Squire's game were naturally free for any man to shoot. You may be sure that the Institute perished in the bud: it was never more heard of, though the little Radical did say the Squire was a tyrant for his conduct on that occasion.

And now there will not be wanting those who will wonder there could be in the very heart of England, and in the core and stomach of the nineteenth century, so prejudiced and old-fashioned a fellow as the Old Squire; and they will perhaps laugh at him with contempt. But as we look at him, civil gentleman, as he sits before us, with his gray hairs and his pale and honest face, we cannot for a moment share in such mirth. You should have seen the Squire in his own proper function, when all things went smoothly. We were going to say, you should have seen him at church on a Sunday-morning; but, alack! even there

all things have not gone smoothly. Ten years ago, the Squire was perfectly satisfied with the church—that is to say, with his own parish-church; and the church was not only satisfied with, but proud of the Squire. Every Sunday-morning, throughout the whole year—for the Squire has no London seasons of absence and dissipation—you saw him in his pew, with all his family around him; and in a neighbouring pew, of humbler dimensions, you saw as many of his servants as could be spared from the necessary preparations of a good dinner; for a good dinner the Squire always has on a Sunday, being in this respect, as in many others, no Puritan, but a Church-of-England-man of the old stamp, to whom Sunday is, in truth, a festival. He was, moreover, a pattern to all the parish in his behaviour at church. His voice was faithful to every response, and as loud, within a note or two, as that of the old clerk himself. So noted was he in this matter, that, from the silence of the rest, you might have supposed they deemed it his peculiar privilege, and a thing which by no means they might aspire unto without being guilty of an unmannerly forwardness. There never was in those days a dispute about a church-rate, for the Squire always conceded any necessary repair, and the rest of the parish always seconded the Squire's will, be it what it might. Did the interior of the fine old church want a fresh coat of whitewash, to obliterate still further every vestige of its medieval designs?—it was only to be mentioned, and the mason was sent for. Were new service-books wanted, a new surplice, or any repairs on the exterior of the material fabric?—the whole parish seemed to have a special pleasure in meeting the demands. Then we must not forget, how every Sunday there was laid upon the dining-table at the Hall, an extra knife and fork—excuse us for using so vulgar an expression, for it is the old way of speaking of such a thing—an extra knife and fork for the curate, which was a true act of courtesy and hospitality, and to the curate it was, moreover, a charity; for curates have but small stipends, and many poor to console—a thing which cannot always be effected by good words alone.

We speak of all this in the past tense, for there have been some things to ruffle the old fashion, and sorely cross the Squire in a matter wherein his conscience gave him the warmest approbation. A new curate came, and he was dissatisfied with the old ways: nothing could suit him. It was even said that he believed the Squire not orthodox, being both badly informed, and, moreover, unsound in sundry and vital articles of doctrine. Such a thing was never before heard of: a squire to lack in orthodoxy, and be unfaithful to the established church! This was to make him a Puritan, and his own conscience told him that he was doubly guiltless in that respect. He thought the world was gone mad; and the parish, instead of condemning the Squire, condemned the curate, who in his turn rated them all soundly for their ignorance and unbelief.

From these instances, which could easily be multiplied, it is manifest that the Squire has fallen upon troublous times; and we may not wonder if he has entertained but a sorry opinion of our manifold inventions, and their practical application to the comforts and uses of society. He was comfortable enough in the world before; and whilst he saw his own parish decently prosperous, we may easily imagine that the great world of mercantile England without, would enter but little into the pleasant paths of his thoughts, seeing he is but slightly acquainted with the world, being a man given much to the conversation of his own fireside, and free from all imputation of gadding abroad. Let us, therefore, for a moment look at the Old Squire as he thus dwells apart, and moves within the boundaries of his own society. Embowered amid ancient elms and dateless oaks, there is the Old Hall, substantial and

dignified in its architecture, with its two wings forming the spacious courtyard in front; and its flat and battlemented roof, whence you have a fair prospect of the surrounding country, and which seems to remind us of our old crusading associations with the East, and to assert that man was made for the contemplation of heaven. There are no such houses built now; it stands alone, and the aspect thereof carries us back far away to the old mouldy days of kingly lines, that have possessed the throne and perished for ever, leaving their escutcheons, their tombs, and their statues for our inheritance, and their names and deeds for the page of the historian. Such a house must be the home of an hospitable master; the abode of kindly and gentle feelings, of sweet and charitable natures. There is no stern, gloomy tower, that broods with a grim satisfaction over the mourning captive, while it keeps a suspicious though defiant watch for the assaulting foe. It is an English house, built not for war, but peace; reposing securely in its green valley beneath the shadow of a mighty and glorious sceptre. It must have had its birth when the restless and powerful barons had been humbled, and the monarch had become enshrined in the hearts of the people, as the restorer, the defender, and the pledge of liberty; whilst its history is an ample proof of the wisdom of the people's confidence in their sovereign. Secure and unmolested, it has stood through many a vicissitude of human fortune. Has sickness invaded the poor man's cottage?—it is some gentle hand from the Hall that is ever ready to administer health and consolation. Is any work of substantial goodness and charity devised by the curate for the edification of his parishioners?—it is from the Hall, as from a well-stored quiver, he draws the arrows of his enterprise. Full as is the valley of verdure and golden flowers in June, so full is each heart beneath that old hospitable roof of kindly feeling and sweet thoughts towards their fellow-creatures.

Thus morally vigorous and healthful, the Old Squire presents to us a picture which we cannot but admire, and whose estimate none could think of taking by the line and plummet of a mere secular science. His heart is the seat of the noblest and the best of human sympathies, and we will not, therefore, think the worse of him though his wits be too slow to keep pace with our modern advancement, and too dull for the conception of a cheat against any of God's creatures. With the huge battle-axe of his ancestors in his hand, we think he would be as noble a supporter to the escutcheon of our sovereign as the renowned lion itself, and as emblematic, too, of the honour, the integrity, and the might of Old England. He is the very model of loyalty: you should hear him at the head of the yeoman troop, when he makes his annual speech; for it is as if one of the old hard-fighting dead had risen from his grave on the long-forgotten battle-field, and once more beheld the royal diadem in imminent peril from the foe, so pithy are his protestations of loyalty, and so full of a martial and daring spirit. He is, in truth, like one who in this respect has slept since the days of the old Cavaliers, and who has now awakened up with feelings and animosities, apprehensions and alarms, whereof the majority makes no reckoning, and which the aspect of the times seems hardly to warrant. We wonder if our gracious and august sovereign has ever seen the Old Squire; whether so or not, we will venture to say, that a more devoted, and more-to-be-depended-upon subject, she has not—no, not among all the golden coronets that surround her throne, and with obsequious reverence wait for her honours. He is a thorough Englishman, of a religion most practical and devout, of a loyalty that has never been impeached, and of an integrity in all his transactions among men that has nothing but an honest heart and a good purpose for its foundation. Long may he

live, and his Old Hall stand amid its ancestral trees, as peaceful and as hospitable as it has done through the growth and consolidation of his country's liberties, and the waxing glory of his sovereign's crown!

THE EXILE AND THE EMPEROR.

VOLTAIRE, in the tale of the *Optimist*, makes his hero Candide, while at Venice, partake of a dinner at which all the guests have, much to his surprise, the title of 'Sire' applied to them by their different valets. The sixth and last, however, is addressed in a somewhat different strain from the others. 'Faith, sire, they will give your majesty no more credit, nor me either; and you and I run a fair chance to-night of being caught hold of. I am going to look after myself—good-by.'

Now, as it was the time of the Carnival, Candide had little difficulty in attributing the strange mimicry of royalty, which he had just witnessed, to the character of the season. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'this is a singular joke! Why, are you all kings?'

One of the guests answered gravely: 'I am not joking; my name is Achmet III. I was grand sultan for several years; I dethroned my brother; my nephew dethroned me.'

Then another: 'My name is Ivan; I was emperor of all the Russias, but was deposed in my cradle.'

Then another: 'I am Charles Edward, king of England.'

And another: 'I am king of Poland.'

And another: 'I am also king of Poland.'

And then the sixth and last: 'I am not so great a man as you, gentlemen, but still I have been as much a king as any one else. I am Theodorus; I was elected king in Corsica; I was called *your majesty*, and now I am scarcely called *sir*.'

But in these latter days of running to and fro on the face of the earth, when so many royal luminaries are struck from their planetary circles, the same assemblage of deposed or expectant monarchs would no longer be the matter of surprise which it was to Candide a hundred years ago. And, indeed, it is not long since an equally striking group of runners after thrones and sceptres was presented to the admiring gaze of the British public, in a manner which bade fair to throw at least a partial eclipse over the once solitary lustre of the famous dinner of the *Optimist* at Venice. And who was the Theodorus of that group? We shall see.

It was on the occasion of a dramatic representation at St James's Theatre, some time in the month of June 1847, that the incident to which I allude took place. From the pit to the boxes, and the boxes to the gallery, the whole house was crowded with spectators. Fashion had displayed all the luxury of its resources, and the embellishments of the building, vying with the charms of beauty and the richness of jewellery and dress, had lent to the *tout-ensemble* an aspect which it rarely wore.

It was a royal night, and the Queen and Prince Albert occupied the royal box. By their side sat the Duke of Nemours—not then an exile, eating the bitter bread of foreign hospitality, but the offspring of a reigning king, the future regent of a great country, the near connection of the sovereign who now, in the sunshine of his success, gave him so gracious a welcome to the English court. Below, however, the scene was less flattering to the theory of the divine right of kings. On one side sat the Duke of Brunswick, with his diamonds and his rouge, an exile from his beloved 'Vaterland;' on the other, and opposite him, the Count of Montemolin, pretender to the Spanish throne. In the first tier of boxes, concealed by the intervening drapery, and shrouded, as it were, with the shadows of misfortune, sat the dethroned brother of Don Pedro—Don Miguel himself; and nothing was wanting to the

tableau of defunct sovereigns or ousted pretenders, but the presence of the culminating Theodorus of the scene.

Every one was making his comments on the strange coincidence which had brought so many claimants of royalty together into one spot, and smiling at the mutability of things, when suddenly, by the orchestra, entered Louis Napoleon. The situation was striking. There was nothing to break its effect, as the curtain was down, and every one was yielding to the train of thoughts naturally engendered by the spectacle. A sense of ridicule seized on the whole assembly; a laugh passed from the orchestra through the pit, even to the royal box. The very name of Louis Napoleon seemed to warrant a smile—a smile at the folly of the hero of Strasbourg and Boulogne. Louis Napoleon was not slow to understand the object of so much merriment. He threw a cold and sullen glance on the royal box, where the Duke of Nemours, the son of the king of France, sat in smiling mockery at the luckless aspirant to his father's throne; and then rising from his seat, he slowly and deliberately placed himself on the left side of the theatre, under that royal box, and in such a manner as to break the view of its inmates.

What were his feelings at the moment? Now, that we know the man, we can fancy, at least, somewhat of the bitterness which must have overswept his heart, when thus treated as the subject of general ridicule by a large and crowded audience—when thus mocked by the successful rival of his fortunes, and smiled at by the sovereign in whose lands he was an exile. We can fancy somewhat of the dark shadows and the tangled passions, and the impenetrable throbbings of vengeance and hate, which must have then possessed the soul of the exile of King Street—the present emperor of France, and the late guest of Queen Victoria.

No men are more often deceived in the character of individuals, than those who are reckoned among the sages of the land. As they have no tendency toward adventurous action in themselves, they of course throw discredit on every one else who has; and should the knight-errant, in his earliest sallies, meet, as haply he may do, with the fate of the unfortunate Don Quixote, it is at once decided that bedlam is the ultimate goal of his destiny. No appeal lies from this opinion; and the unthinking mass, without taking the trouble to investigate its rationality, at once adopt it as a truism beyond the reach or possibility of doubt.

Yet, even admitting, to its greatest extent, the principle of popular uncharitableness, we can still scarcely realise to ourselves at the present moment the degree of supercilious pity, of hearty contempt, of universal derision, with which Napoleon was treated in the days by-gone. Circumstances have belied the wisecracks who shook their heads at that very rash young man, who made such a mess of it at Strasbourg, and such a fool of himself and his eagle at Boulogne; and few who witnessed his reception by the English crown and the English people on the day of his arrival in the metropolis, would have fancied that, only eight years ago, a scene such as that which I have just described had taken place in ridicule of this same man!—then a discomfited pretender, but now an imperial guest. And strange must have been his thoughts when he pointed out to the fair partner of the pomp and circumstance of his present life, the house and the street in which he dwelt in the times of his misfortune! Old forms were still about, and the clubs teemed with familiar faces; but now, every window was white with waving handkerchiefs—every roof crowded—every lamp-post freighted with its due burden of curiosity—every footpath lined with solid rows of human beings; and the whole heart of England seemed to throb with the sympathetic shout which followed the imperial cortège through that city in which Napoleon was once an exile and a pretender.

Such are the vicissitudes of human fortune; and happy is he who, neither in sunshine nor in cloud, forgets the alternative which may await him. That Louis Napoleon does not, ought to be the earnest hope of all those who wish him well in the great and good labours of his life.

A RUSSIAN PRIEST.

SOME years since, a remarkable work appeared in Russia, *Memoirs of a Russian Priest*, edited by Ivan Golovine. A French translation of it was published in Paris in 1849; but hitherto, so far as we can ascertain, it has remained unknown in this country. Passing events give peculiar interest to details illustrative of Russian manners and customs; and our good monk, writing from a Russian monastery of the Order of St Basil, says: * 'When this history shall see the light, it will be too late to tear out my eyes, for they will be closed by death. I shall be deaf to the reproaches it will excite. May they not extinguish the truths which I tell!'

'I was born,' says our anonymous writer, 'in 1782, at Porkhov, of the priestly caste. My father was a priest, and my mother a priestess—*popadia*—a title given to the wife of a priest, although she does not in any way participate in the sacred office. From the cradle, therefore, I was destined to the service of the church; for it is a rule, from which it is very difficult to obtain a dispensation, that the son of a priest must follow his father's profession.

'At the age of nine years, I was placed in the seminary of Pskov. Even now, its very name causes a shudder to pass through me, at the recollection of what I suffered there from cold. I fancy I still see the slender wooden tower; I can hear the tinkling bell which summoned us to study, and the hoarse voice of the inspecting monk; I recall the gloomy passages in which we were crowded, while awaiting the opening of the classes; but the memory of the intense cold I endured, freezes me whenever it recurs. I spent thirteen years at the seminary in learning what it took me but one year to forget.

'The government allowed 2000 paper rubles (about L.90) for the annual support of forty intern pupils, and the payment of some twenty professors. It was therefore not surprising that our apartments were left unwarmed even in the depth of winter. The piercing air, when far below freezing-point, found no other corrective than the pupils' breath. In winter, our studies commenced before sunrise. We rushed pell-mell into a gloomy hall, and crowded together until the class-rooms opened. In order to warm ourselves, we used to box and wrestle. The entry of the inspecting monk, half asleep, and more than half drunk, always reduced us to silence; but not content with this result, he used regularly to seize the first luckless wight who came near him, and transfer him to the porter, who had the charge of administering the rod. In this way, the innocent suffered quite as often as the guilty. There were extern pupils in the establishment, who were lodged and fed by their parents; and interns, or *boursaks*, who were necessarily orphans. On my father's death, which took place when I was in my fourteenth year, I was admitted amongst the latter.

'As to our food, they certainly gave us meat; but what meat! Our hunger was much more frequently appeased by ill-treatment and want of exercise than by food.

'For our dress, each *boursak* received a frock-coat

and a *touloup*, or sheep-skin pelisse, every three years, and a felt carpet, which served him as a bed during his whole sojourn at the seminary. A very small sum was also allowed for cap, boots, and linen.

'There were six classes in our seminary, whose studies professed to include the whole range of human learning; but the performance differed much from the promise. I was considered one of the best pupils; yet, with the exception of Latin, everything I know was learned after I left the establishment. During the latter part of my sojourn there, I was made teacher of German, although I never knew a word of that language. All our professors were monks; and the ignorance of the Russian monks is notorious. Amongst them, audacity supplied the place of learning; and if there be more merit in teaching what we do not know than what we do, they certainly possessed that merit in a high degree. As they always had the book open before them, and followed the pupils in their recitations, they themselves usually learned a little in the end.

'I never had much vocation for the ecclesiastical profession; nor was my sojourn at the seminary calculated to overcome the dislike I felt at the idea of becoming a priest. Indeed, there are very few individuals amongst the Russian priesthood who embrace their profession as a matter of choice. The tyranny to which they are subjected is most oppressive. In the district of Kholm, a priest had been consulted by the peasants on the question as to whether they had a right to appeal to the authority of government against the tyranny of their masters. The papa wrote to St Petersburg, to a functionary with whom he was acquainted. He received an answer to the effect, that all discontented serfs who complain are severely punished—one-half of the hair and beard is shorn, and they are branded as rebels and liars. The papa shewed this letter to the peasants, and for doing so, he was banished to Siberia. Another priest employed a portion of the parochial revenues in repairing the church; for this he was brought to trial, and sentenced to be transferred to a remote and desert parish. The poor man was so overwhelmed with grief, that he died ere the sentence could be carried into effect. Having some aptitude for study, I wished to become a lay-professor in one of the colleges; but my intention having come to the ears of the archimandrite, his high reverence caused me to be informed, that if I persisted in my design, he would use his influence to have me made a soldier. Knowing that opposition would be vain, I resigned myself to my fate, and became a priest.'

As a necessary preliminary to ordination, our author took a wife. His next step in life was to become chaplain to a rich landed proprietor, named Streschneff. This gentleman, although unhappily, through his French education, a freethinker in matters of religion, appears to have treated the priest in a far more kind and liberal manner than is usual in Russia, where the lower clergy are almost invariably regarded as a degraded caste. His son, Alexis, an amiable young man, and captain in the Russian army, during one of his visits to his home, took so strong a liking to his father's chaplain, that he invited him to accompany him in the approaching campaign against the French—it was in 1807—promising him the post of regimental chaplain. The proposal seems to have been very agreeable to the papa; and accordingly, having obtained permission from the archbishop of the diocese, he and his young friend speedily found themselves on the road to St Petersburg.

'Nothing,' he says, 'was talked of on our journey but the great victory gained by the Russians over the French at Eylau. I could not, however, help suspecting that the victory on our side was not quite so real.

'Besides the divine services which I had to perform for the regiment, it was my duty to teach the soldiers

* The book professes to be a posthumous publication.

to repeat the names and titles of the imperial family. This lesson took place every Saturday; and I confess I could never endure to witness the blows which these poor people received for making the slightest mistake in the titles or order of precedence of the members of the august house. In the month of March 1807, we rejoined Benningsten and the chief body of the army on the shores of the Pregel and the Alle. The state of the troops was deplorable; provisions ran short, and the men were discontented at not being commanded by a Russian. We, chaplains, were expected to support and encourage the minds of the soldiers, and prettily some of us accomplished the task. Superstition came in aid of the stick—that great Russian captain. The soldier, having given his oath to serve the czar to the last drop of his blood, thought he should go to perdition if he drew back; to paradise, if he died with courage. Our business was to fan this flame. "Take courage," some of my colleagues used to say; "it is only in this world that you will have to serve the nobles; in the next, they will be placed on funeral piles, and you will have to fetch wood to burn them." Some of the fellows, when they were certain of not being overheard by their officers, would reply: "We shall have to go a long distance for the wood."

"The Russian is by nature a soldier; and the blindness of his rulers must be very great, when they think it necessary to sustain his courage by the terror of blows."

"I shall not enter into any details of the campaign until the battle of Friedland. That was a disastrous day for me; for my brave and kind young friend, Alexis Streschneff, fell in action. His company shewed some reluctance to advance. Many in the ranks cried out: "Whither is the German leading us?" Alexis, brandishing his sword, exclaimed: "If a German commands you, a Russian leads you on. Forward!" Scarcely had he spoken, when a ball struck him in the breast. Some soldiers raised him in their arms and bore him to the rear. I was with him instantly; he pressed my hand, invoked my blessing, and murmuring, "Tell my father that my last thought was for him!" expired.

"Soon afterwards the rout became complete. Ten or twelve soldiers might be seen carrying one wounded man, as an excuse for getting away from the combat. One general of the Guards passed close by me. The Grand Duke Constantine asked him where he was going. "I have got the colic," he replied, pressing his hand on his stomach.

"Absorbed in grief for my friend, I followed in the retreat mechanically. A Cossack sold me a French horse for two ducats. I found linen and tobacco concealed in the saddle; yet every one told me I paid much too large a sum. The animal, however, was of essential service to me in our rapid flight to the frontier. After having crossed it, we burned the bridge over the Niemen; and shortly afterwards the two emperors had their memorable meeting on the raft at Tilsit.

"On returning to Russia, our regiment passed through the government of Pskov, my native district. We halted two days at Petchora, where there is a rich monastery. The superior invited me to dinner, together with the colonel and some of the officers. He shewed us the treasures of the monastery, of which the greater part was given by Ivan IV., surnamed the Terrible. When this tyrant came into Lithuania, Cornelius, the superior of the convent, represented to him that, owing to its proximity to the frontier, the monastery was in danger of being attacked by the enemy, and asked and obtained permission to fortify it. When the war was ended, the czar passed again through Petchora, and, forgetting the permission which he had granted, flew into a fearful passion at the sight of the towers and ramparts which

had been raised. Cornelius coming to meet him, the czar struck him down with the blow of a club on his head, and laid him dead at his feet. So far is matter of history; but the legend goes on to say, that the holy man picked up his head, tucked it under his arm, and then quietly stepped down into the vaults, where he still reposes. Remorse seized upon Ivan, as soon as his fury was passed; by way of atonement, he bestowed a quantity of valuables on the monastery. He was the most pious and most cruel of tyrants. Streschneff was right when he said, that the atrocities of sovereigns were by no means prevented by the faith which they professed.

"One of our officers discovered in the monastery a monk vowed to solitude, a *schinnik*, and spoke to us of him with enthusiasm. I expressed a desire to see him; but the superior dissuaded me, saying he was a particularly uninteresting drunkard."

Becoming tired of his semi-military career, our author resigned his post of chaplain, and occupied himself in extending his own literary acquirements, and in instructing the sons of some nobles. His account of his adventures is intermingled with some piquant anecdotes. Speaking of the death of the Emperor Paul I., he says: "After this event, it was ordered to be proclaimed in every church that his majesty had died in consequence of a "violent stroke of apoplexy." A village priest, ignorant of the terms of medical policy, could make nothing of the word apoplexy, and substituted for it a Russian phrase which has nearly the same sound, *po pleschi* (on the forehead); so that he was understood to declare that his majesty had died from a "violent stroke on the forehead." As it happened, this version was strictly correct."

Having got into a few mundane scrapes, our priest resolved to retire into a monastery, where he employed a portion of his abundant leisure in writing the work before us, of which the greater portion consists in an account of the Greek Church. Amongst other curious remarks, he says that the reason for mingling hot water with the sacramental wine, is to imitate the natural temperature of blood. "There are five kinds of bread for the holy communion (*prosvira*). They are made in the form of two circles, placed one upon the other, and are manufactured by the widow of a priest or deacon, who thus gains her livelihood. These five kinds are—the bread of Jesus Christ; that of the Virgin; that of the saints; the bread of the living; and the bread of the dead. Each sort bears the stamp J. N. R. J. (Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judæorum). The bread of Jesus Christ is cut through; they take a triangular piece from the upper portion, and from the bread of the living they cut besides as many bits as there are members of the imperial family. All these pieces are put into the vase of sacred wine. The bread of Jesus Christ is distributed in small bits to the communicants; the other kinds are given exclusively to the privileged classes, to the most influential nobles, and the most generous merchants in the parish.

"In baptism, they have disused the practice of plunging the newly-born infant into cold water, which, in such a climate as that of Russia, seriously compromised its life. At present, the water is warmed, and they expel the evil spirit from it by breathing over it three times, in such a manner as each time to describe the sign of the cross. If the child happens to have any hair, the priest cuts it off, folds it in wax, and throws it into the water. Do not ask me what is the signification of this custom: I have never been able to explain it to myself, although I have so often practised it. At burials, a paper is placed in the hand of the corpse, which is meant to accompany him into the other world. It is a prayer for the remission of all sins, voluntary and involuntary. A sort of sacred porridge (*kou-tia*) is blessed, and placed on the coffin of the deceased, and also in other parts of the church. It is composed of a

strange mixture: the wheat and rice figure the resurrection; the honey, the joys of Heaven; the other ingredients are mere accessories. In the villages, it is customary to give half this food, as well as half the Easter-bread, to the priest and his assistants.

'Of all ceremonies in the Greek Church, the strangest is that of the anathema. I remember being present at it at St Petersburg, in the Kasan cathedral. It takes place on the second Sunday in Lent. The archdeacon, with his deep voice, pronounces an anathema on the memory of Mazeppa and of Stenka Krazine, while the old archbishops, in their sepulchral tones, repeat at each name, "Anathema!" "Anathema," repeats the archdeacon, "against those who do not observe Lent." "Anathema!" answer the old prelates between their teeth, and laughing in their sleeves, as they consider that they of all others deserve that malediction. What can be more barbarous than this custom? One must have a great contempt for a people whom one seeks to frighten by such means; and yet the czar, who introduced this practice, did not deceive himself as to the effect which he expected from it. The visible trembling of the crowd at each anathema, proved that it was not the vaults of the church alone that were shaken.'

Our priest seems to be quite as fully aware of the civil and military, as of the religious abuses prevalent in his country. According to him, the late emperor was very far from being popular amongst his subjects. He says:

'A confessor one day asked an officer of the Guards if he feared God.

"No," was the reply; "I love Him, and I do not fear Him."

'The priest then inquired if he loved the emperor.

"No," said the officer; "I fear him, and I do not love him."

'A few days afterwards, this candid officer was transferred with the same rank into a regiment of the line, which was a severe penalty, as the grades in the Guards are two degrees higher than those in the army. I could name both the confessor and the officer, but refrain from doing so lest it might injure the latter.'

In a work published several years ago, it is curious to read the following anecdote:—The emperor, in one of his excursions, was upset in his carriage while passing through the government of Tambov, and broke his collar-bone. While in bed, he asked for a book, and they brought him a volume of the *Russian Encyclopaedic Dictionary*. Under the letter B, he found a eulogistic article on Louis Bonaparte; and after having read it, he wrote in pencil on the margin: "The censors must be reprimanded: Prince Louis is nothing but a"—

Our author gives an interesting account of the rise and progress of the schism between the Greek and Roman Churches; as also of the various attempts made since the year 1593 to reunite them under the title of 'The United Greek Church,' which acknowledges the pope's supremacy. The professors of this form of religion in Russia were most cruelly persecuted by the Czar Nicholas. The details of the cruelties practised towards the heroic nuns of Minsk, are most graphically given in the work before us; but they are too well known to be reproduced here.

We shall conclude our extracts from these memoirs with an anecdote of Prince Menschikoff, which he is said to have related himself.

'The devil,' said Prince Menschikoff, 'came one day to claim my soul. "So," said I, "it is the soul of the minister of the navy you require? Well, there are two of them—I, who overlook the affairs of the salt-water; and Count Kleinminchel, who presides over the fresh-water canals and rivers: go, look for him!"

'Off went the fiend; but he soon returned, making an infernal uproar.

"You have deceived me," he cried to the prince; "you sent me to that other fellow!"

"Well?"

"Well! he has no soul!"'

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF A STRAW-BONNET.

It will be admitted that no building, however perfect in its proportions, or costly in its details, could be considered finished without a roof to cover it. Neither could the gentler part of the creation, however graceful their costumes, or exquisite in every other respect their toilets, venture abroad without a covering to protect, as well as adorn, the luxuriant curls, or smooth braids, which form woman's most charming ornament. This obvious necessity has laid the foundation of one of the largest and most flourishing trades of our country, raising into national importance the manufacture of what is commonly taken as the type of everything worthless and insignificant—straw. It may not be uninteresting to our readers to trace the process of manufacturing a lady's straw-bonnet, and the various kinds of labour necessary to produce in perfection that bane of all indulgent husbands and fathers.

The superior description of straw is chiefly grown in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, and the wheat-straw principally used in the manufacture of bonnets is raised on a light chalky soil. A considerable quantity of inferior straw is produced in Essex, and pipe-straws are frequently sent in large quantities from Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire to be plaited in that county, which has a peculiar method of plaiting or weaving it. The Essex manufacturers plait in what is technically termed *sets*—that is, they work up the whole of the straws at one time, and then insert whatever number they may be working with at once. The plaiters of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, on the contrary, insert only a single straw at a time, at shorter intervals, leaving a continuous fringe on the inside of the straw, constituting a kind of selvage, which has afterwards to be removed by scissors.

The most primitive form of the manufacture is termed a whole straw-plait, which means that the straw pipes are plaited without being split or divided. Notwithstanding all recent improvements and changes, this plait still maintains its ground, being much used by ladies for morning or undress bonnets—women of the lower classes having a prejudice in favour of a finer material. Splitting straw into various sizes is effected by a simple but ingenious machine called a straw-splitter. A splitter is in the shape of a small wheel, inserted in a mahogany-frame, and furnished in the centre with small sharp divisions like spokes. From the axle of this wheel protrudes a small spike, on which a straw pipe is placed and pushed through, the cutters or spokes dividing it in the process into as many divisions as may be required for the various qualities of straw-plait. From this small instrument have arisen the innumerable varieties of plait which for the last half-century have been devised by the ingenuity of inventors—plaits varying from the simple split-straw of seven to the more complicated ones of nineteen. The names of these varieties it would be too tedious to enumerate. Simple split-straw shews alternately bright and dull portions—that is, the outside and inside; differing from the next invention, which, allowing only outsides to be seen, shews a uniform bright surface. The reverse of this method, shewing only the dull white face of the inside, produces that form of the commodity termed *rice-straw*, erroneously supposed, even by many of the trade, to be produced from the straw of the rice-plant.

Previous to the rise of this trade, which has made rapid strides within the last fifty years, what may

now be termed the straw counties were originally purely agricultural ones, and consequently were poor, affording little or no occupation for the female portion of the rural population. Their prosperity and improvement may, therefore, reasonably be dated from that epoch. At present, the great majority of the women and children find employment in plaiting and sewing, and even many of the men likewise. The head country-quarters of this trade is Luton; it has been so for some time, owing to most of the largest London houses having established branch-factories there. Luton, indeed, bears the same relation to the straw as Northampton does to the shoe trade, and has considerably the start of Dunstable. The returns of many of the largest houses in the trade, fall little short of a quarter of a million per annum.

Tuscan-straw forms also a very important branch of these manufactures. Much of it is brought into this country in a manufactured state; but still larger quantities of the unworked straw are imported, and afterwards plaited in England. Tuscan-straw is produced from a species of wheat sown thickly on poor land, purposely to produce fine and thin straw, without special reference to the grain; it is much used in the manufacture of fancy-bonnets, which are designed in such endless varieties, that we cannot attempt classification. Some most beautiful fabrics in fancy articles are made of white horsehair, manufactured in Switzerland. Leghorns are composed of the same material as Tuscan, worked, however, in a different manner, the seat of the manufacture being chiefly in Florence.

The beautiful white chips used so much on bridal occasions, our fair readers will perhaps be surprised to learn, are made from the Lombardy poplar. The process is as follows:—A young tree is split into sections, and planed smooth; after which another plane is used, composed of a number of cutters, which make longitudinal incisions in the wood, to be afterwards taken off in numerous fine strips with a smooth plane. But our humbler English willow will frequently compete with these foreign manufactures; and still more recently, from our own native poplar-tree, we have produced a fabric quite equal in both colour and quality to the foreign. Hitherto, however, this last has been chiefly used in fancy plaitings.

We export largely manufactured straw goods, likewise raw material, principally to America and the colonies. The chief seat of the Brazilian hat-manufactures, and likewise of our fancy weaving-trade, is St Albans and its vicinity, where may be seen boys and girls employed in the schools making these hats, but at a pitifully low price. First-class goods are mostly manufactured in London, there being a certain style and workmanship there which the provinces are unable to achieve.

It is a practice of the work-people to purchase material on their own account, and, making it up into manufactured goods of the commonest description, to dispose of these to the large houses. This gives rise, when the market is overstocked, and the goods sell for what they will fetch, to great distress and discontent; and it is injurious not only to the work-people, but the employers, by its bringing into the market a vast quantity of low-priced and inferior goods.

Formerly, every bonnet-shop used to manufacture its own goods; but since the introduction of large wholesale warehouses, scarcely one of them now does so. Even when a lady orders a bonnet to be made at a favourite shop, that bonnet is usually procured from some wholesale-dealer, who, having a greater command of material and inventive talent, can make goods both better and cheaper than the show-shops. There is a marked difference in the appearance of these emporiums of fashion now, to what they presented fifteen or twenty years ago: bonnets were then generally exposed in the windows untrimmed; now, the

millinery trade being combined with the retail-straw, the attractions of a bonnet are considerably enhanced.

After the purchase of varieties of plait by the wholesale dealers, commences the process of bleaching the straw, which is an art confined to a few. It consists—so far as we are at liberty to explain what is, of course, an important secret—of washing and immersing the material in a compound of acids and alkalies, in the proportions of which the mystery is contained. It is afterwards fumigated with sulphur in a confined box or chamber, and when dry, becomes fit to pass into the hands of the sewers. This last is a critical period in the manufacture of the bonnet: it may become a chef-d'œuvre, or a dowdy, under the manipulations of its feminine architect.

Let us view the workroom of a large establishment. Asmodeus-like, peeping through the sky-light, we behold from fifty to a hundred women contained in an apartment well warmed, well lighted, well ventilated. On tables placed before them, they have wooden or plaster blocks, of various shapes, according to the reigning mode, on which they form the bonnet. This done, the bonnet must be stiffened, which is effected with fine white gelatine, put on the surface with a brush; and when dry, it is fit for the next operation, which is blocking. This last is performed chiefly by male assistants, as it requires strength and endurance, unfitted for female hands—the 'fancys' excepted, which being lighter work, and requiring greater skill and taste, is mostly intrusted to women.

Blocking means pressing the bonnet. It is effected with a box-iron, wet muslin cloths being constantly placed on the straw during the operation. Some years ago, machines were used for this process; but the shapes being now more complicated, there remain scarcely any of them in use. The bonnet is now wired, and it is finished.

VIEWS FROM THE QUANTOCKS.

THE most interesting part of Somersetshire is the Quantocks; they are a range of hills seen on the right from the railway-train, between Weston-super-Mare and Bridgewater. Willaneck, the highest point, is about 1600 feet above the level of the sea, and commands a magnificent panoramic view. From this hill the Bristol Channel is seen, bounded by the Welsh mountains; and beneath, the abrupt point of Minehead forms a fine headland, and the lofty Dunkerry Beacon stretches far away in the distance.

To the right, on the Quantock range, is a hill called Danesborough, on which are the remains of a Roman encampment; this forms a bold foreground to the picture; beyond, the scene is spread far and wide, and as we saw it last, was worthy the pen of a poet. A colossal cloud extended over one-half the distant sky; as we gazed, it rose slowly and majestically, like the dark curtain of a world-theatre, revealing, as its deep shadow withdrew from the landscape, a scene of exquisite beauty. The sun burst from beneath the canopy; the gladdened waters reflected the intense blue of the clear sky beyond; and the sun-rays lit up, one by one, the distant headlands.

The Mendip Hills form the background to another section of the panorama. A remarkable feature arrests the eye; in the centre of the chain, the hills are rent from top to base, forming a chasm of 400 feet in depth, and making a pass through the rock of nearly three miles in length. A fanciful historian might suggest that another wizard, such as Michael Scott, had ordered his familiar demon to rend the rocks in this fantastic fashion. We all remember, in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*:

And, warrior, I could say to thee
The words that cleft Eildon Hills in three.

The Cheddar Cliffs, as they are called, are truly grand

as well as beautiful; near them are some interesting caverns of carbonate of lime. This is the district where the far-famed Cheddar-cheese is made; truly, it is a comfortable spot for English industry, with its picturesque dairy-farms, so green and happy-looking.

Between the Quantock and the Mendip range is a curious insulated hill, called Brent Knoll. On the top is a double irregular intrenchment, in which brass and silver coins of the Romans have been frequently found. In digging at the base, spear-heads, fibulae, and other remains have been discovered. On the south side of the hill, is a place called Battleborough, which preserves the memory of a fierce conflict between King Alfred and the Danes.

The land which spreads for miles to the south of Brent Knoll, is called the Marsh, being formerly covered by the salt-water. Standing on the heights of the Quantocks, the very outline may almost be traced of what was once the estuary of the sea. In the course of long ages, the waters have retreated, and the ground, enriched by the alluvial deposit, is left to the industry of man. It is considered the richest district in England, and, indeed, may lay good claim to the title, from the fact of its producing forty bushels of wheat an acre for forty years in succession without dressing, and a bullock and five sheep can be fattened on an acre of pasture-land. A disappointed candidate for the county once said: 'Somersetshire was celebrated for the fatness of its oxen, and the folly of its gentlemen.' The first statement may be easily proved any market-day at Taunton or Bridgewater; the second may possibly be still an open question: as the 'wise men came from the East,' they may perhaps be found settled in the West.

Looking from the Quantocks, on this map-like picture of the Marsh, the philosophical inquirer into nature's secrets might wish to recall, for one short hour, a glance at the long-gone past, when the sea rolled its blue waves over that fertile plain; when the plesiosaurus and the cheirotherium existed in their antediluvian grandeur, and their vast colossal bodies palpitated with life. Several very perfect skeletons of these extinct animals have been found in this district, and the adjacent caves of Banwell are full of the bones of lions, tigers, and elephants. What was in times of yore the climate of this our northern isle? Whence the remains of tropical plants and animals? What the habits of those extinct monsters of the blue lias, whose bones are now so carefully preserved in our museums? These are questions which wondering philosophy asks, but which no science can satisfactorily answer. The medals of creation may suggest a new chronology, but absolute truth is still in the womb of elemental chaos. The laws of nature can only be read as reflected starlight on the troubled waters. The past is as a scroll of prophecy to the future; and as mighty changes have taken place in the world, so is the present but a transition state. Change is nature's greatest law—change unseen, unfelt, but certain—as Milton says so eloquently of the earth's diurnal motion:

Her silent course advance,
With inoffensive pace, that spinning sleeps
On her soft axle; while she paces even,
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along.

But to leave the mysterious past in the grave of Time, we come to days united to ourselves by the ties of human interest. In this level Marsh, the battle of Sedgemoor took place in 1685, between the Duke of Monmouth and the troops of James II. A tree, which was cut down in this locality a year or two since, was found by the carpenter to be literally full of bullets. Further off, but still a distinct object from the Quantocks, is a peculiar conical hill, called by the Romans *Insula Avalonia*. At the foot of this hill stand the

ruins of the magnificent abbey of Glastonbury, the most princely religious establishment in England. In 1539, the last abbot was hung on the summit of the tor, and the monastery suppressed by Henry VIII.

But from distant vale and hill we withdraw our gaze, to examine the objects of interest beneath our feet. Tradition says that Julius Caesar exclaimed, when he ascended these hills: 'Quantum ab hoc!'—(How much is to be seen from this!); hence the name Quantock. Geologists and mineralogists, who deal in hard facts, tell us that no nomenclature is worth considering but their own. The following minerals and metals are found in the Quantocks:—Sulphate of barytes, arragonite, and many other variations of the carbonates of lime; carbonate-sulphuret and peroxide of iron. There is also yellow sulphuret of copper, peacock copper ore, blue and green carbonate of copper,—the latter known by the name of malachite, many specimens of which are found superior to those brought from Australia. We have seen a beautiful specimen from the Stowey mines, in the form of a cavern roofed with mammillated malachite, and floored with crystallised blue carbonate of copper. Veins of gossan are frequent in the parish of Broomfield, containing a notable proportion of gold. It is a curious fact, that several persons acquainted with the gold-fields of Australia, have remarked on the similarity of the external appearance of the Quantocks to that golden country. A Cornish inspector of mines said, some years ago, that he thought the time would come when the Quantock Hills would become the principal mining district in the west of England. The rustic population have some idea of the existence of the precious metals, for they point out a field in Broomfield parish, where 'an iron bar of gold was found' some years ago—they don't know how many.

Over the hidden treasures which tempt man's avarice, nature flings a vestment of joyous green, bedecked with flowers of a thousand brilliant hues. Nowhere are the wild-flowers more beautiful than on the Quantocks. In the autumn, the hills look like the throne of some giant-king, with their royal colouring of purple and gold; but the sweet-scented heath and the yellow furze exhale their liberal beauties to the wild mountain air, which is, indeed,

More free from peril than the envious court.

The summits of the Quantocks, whose only crop is the whortleberry, extend for miles without a single human habitation; and here the red deer sport in careless security, and black-game but seldom hear the echo of the sportsman's gun. Here, the naturalist may find the haunts of many a wild creature; and the botanist will be richly rewarded with many a rare plant which grows on the sterile table-land, or in the depths of the fertile comb, or valley.

We are not learned in flowers, but we have now and then seen and admired beautiful white heaths, and pure white foxgloves, and a delicate kind of moss which seems tipped with red sealing-wax; and in the late autumn, a saucer-shaped fungus, which glows with vermilion lustre. The combs delve down precipitously, and here the vegetation is rich in the extreme; noble trees rise towering from their deep bosoms, and gushing springs of water traverse the rich and mossy ravines.

The parish of Broomfield, on the Quantocks, is celebrated in *Domesday-book* for the longevity of its inhabitants, and in the *History of Somersetshire* for its fine trees. Two magnificent old yews in the churchyard, according to tradition, have shed their red berries for nearly a thousand autumns; and they still stand as sentinels guarding the remains of past generations, who rest beneath the time-worn tombstones. One of these ancient trees measures more than twenty-five feet in circumference. The old church at Broomfield

is singularly picturesque; the style is what architects call the perpendicular—at least the tower is of that description, apparently about the date of the reign of Henry VII.; but the body of the church is much older, and contains the most exquisite carvings.

On the eastern side of the Quantocks, are the ruins of Cothelstone, once the seat of Lord Stowell, whose attachment to Charles I. brought down upon him the vengeance of the parliament. His woods were cut down, and his house nearly demolished; but on one of the highest points of the Quantocks, a time-beaten tower still bears the name of Cothelstone Lodge. This spot commands a view of fourteen counties and 150 parish-churches. The richly cultivated vale is spread like a green sea beneath the eye, and the smoke of Taunton marks the place where the infamous Judge Jeffreys held his bloody assize.

The Quantock Hills boast more pleasing recollections. They are, in truth, quite classic ground. At Alfoxton and Nether Stowey resided for a time Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey. The readers of Wordsworth's poetry will remember many allusions to this neighbourhood. It is related that Coleridge and Thelwall were sitting once in a beautiful and solitary spot on the hills, when the former said: 'Citizen John, this is a fine place to talk treason in.'

'Nay, Citizen Samuel,' replied Thelwall, 'it is rather a place to make a man forget that there is any necessity for treason.'

The then government of the day looked somewhat suspiciously at the gathering of these choice spirits, for Southey was not *then* poet-laureate, nor of the stuff of which such officials are made. At Stowey, also, visited Charles Lamb and Sir Humphry Davy, at Mr Poole's. But Somersetshire itself is said not to be celebrated for the mental brilliancy of her sons. Sydney Smith, whose residence was in this locality, used to call his neighbours the fat Boetians. The people of these rural districts have rather a distrust of savans. Many curious stories are still afloat respecting the Lake Poets. Some years since, the bones of a dog were accidentally found buried close to a house formerly inhabited by one of the three poets whose names are so often associated together. The owner of the place firmly believed to the day of his death, that the bones were not those of a dog, but the remains of an illegitimate child, murdered by that poet whose amiability is so proverbial. The only foundation which this atrocious story rested on, was sufficiently condemnatory to the mind of the enlightened landowner. The poor poet had a habit of walking about at night, and this simple circumstance suggested to the imagination of the squire a whole category of crime. To him, of course, 'the dread magnificence of heaven' was a blank, and to him 'Dian's lamp' only a mischievous invention of improvident nature to light poachers about their evil business. That a man should walk about at owl's light for any innocent purpose, was inconceivable; hence the story of the bones, which, had we ventured to give in full detail, with the names of places and persons, would assume a darker shade of guilty horror, and be at the same time more ridiculously untrue. A prophet is not only 'not known in his own land,' but he is *mis*known. Murchison and Sedgwick were suspiciously watched as resurrection-men, while on a geological survey in the neighbourhood of a country church-yard; and another party of geologists, including Buckland, Conybeare, and Liebig the chemist, who were paying a visit to Andrew Crosse the electrician, at Broomfield, were thought by the people in a neighbouring country town to be a party of Chartist leaders. Some half-dozen years since, this same Andrew Crosse was speaking from the hustings, being about to propose a candidate for the county. Whenever he began to speak, his voice was drowned by the shouts of a knot of farmers. A commercial traveller from another part

of England asked one of them why they were so furious against that gentleman?

'Oh,' replied the excited agriculturist, 'that's Crosse, of Broomfield, the thunder-and-lightning-man. You can't go near his cursed home at night without danger of your life—devils are often seen dancing on the wires by moonlight!'

These wires, which so excited the fear and indignation of the farmer, are simply an apparatus for experimenting upon the electricity of the atmosphere. Two or three thousand feet of copper-wire are elevated and insulated upon very high poles, some of them a hundred feet above the ground. The wire collects the electricity from the atmosphere, and conveys it into a large and lofty room, devoted to scientific pursuits in the old mansion-house. Occasionally, during a snow-storm, or a heavy fog, the electrical state of the air is manifested by a brilliant discharge of young lightning, which, seen by the astonished peasants through five tall unshuttered casements, makes the place appear as the abode of the darkest diabolism.

It is most interesting to watch—as we have ourselves done, when favoured by a sight of the Broomfield apparatus—the effects on a gold-leaf electrometer connected with the wires without. Though to the eye there is no disturbance in the atmosphere, yet this delicate instrument manifests the perpetual changes which are going on. Occasionally we have seen a sort of ebb and flow of waves of negative and positive electricity, which make the gold leaves palpitate as though instinct with life. By what a world of miracles we are surrounded! What a play of substances are for ever pursuing their ceaseless round of change! Decomposition becomes the agent of recomposition, so that life is perpetual and ubiquitous; as Pythagoras said of old:

What, then, is death, but ancient matter drest
In some new figure and a varied vest?

The following lines, we believe, are only an imitation of the old style, but they express most happily this law of change:

The perfumed flowers with leaflets brighte,
The verdant grasse, the waving corne,
Doe all return to that foule plighte
From which their own sweet life was born.
The essence that within them lurkes
Doth helpe another race to be;
Soe God in endlesse circles workes,
And thus ordains His alchemie.

Old Manuscript.

Some years since, the poet Southey was driving over the Quantock, when he was met by Andrew Crosse, who was thoughtfully pursuing his way on foot. The latter communicated to Southey, after their first greetings were over, the extraordinary fact of his having accidentally discovered *animal life* in some electrical experiments, and under conditions which, in ordinary circumstances, are destructive to life. 'Well,' remarked Southey, in reply to his friend's statement, 'this is the most singular account by which a traveller was ever stopped.' This was the first appearance of the *Acarus Crossei*, that *questio vexata* to the scientific world. The same curious little insects continue to emerge from their mysterious embryo occasionally up to the present time, as we are credibly informed.

Adjoining Broomfield is the parish of Enmore, where some time lived the well-known Lord Rochester. It was on the clerk of this village-church that he wrote the following:

Sternhold and Hopkins had great qualms
When they translated David's Psalms,
To make the heart full glad;
But had it been poor David's fate
To hear thee sing, and them translate,
By Jove, 't had made him mad!

Among the natural curiosities of the Quantock range, is a fissure in a limestone rock, called Holwell Cavern. Its sides and roof are covered with that peculiar kind of crystallised carbonate of lime, called arragonite. Nothing can exceed the beauty of this fanciful grotto. The torch's light is reflected from every side by a thousand iridescent hues; and many a grotesque form arrests the gaze of the curious. The following lines are from an unpublished poem on *The Quantock Hills* :—

That fissure winds to nature's choicest cell
Fancy may feign; but should her wildest power
Deluge some sea-girt cliff with ocean shower,
Then, whilst the spray flies feathered by the blast,
Fix it in stiffened ice, acutely fast.
Pendent from arching roof, the drops concrete,
Till the rude floor the growing crystals meet;
And arborescent shoots their branches twine,
Like the soft tendrils of the tangled vine;
The dazzling whiteness of whose stems might vie
With drifted snows that on the mountains lie.
Silence and sleep, and breathless starless night,
Here claim unquestioned an eternal right.
The sheep's rude bleating, and its tinkling bell,
Pierce not the chasm, nor disenchant the spell;
The shepherd's whistle, and the watch-dog's bark—
The raven's croak, the rapture of the lark—
Die on the passage, ere they pierce the gloom,
Or wake the echoes of the mineral tomb.
Here whilst new realms arise and old decay,
And centuries of crime are swept away,
The night-born filigree of ages gone,
Fenced from all living gaze, creeps slowly on.

Civilisation has its curiosities as well as the material world; and strange manners, as well as strange minerals, are to be found on the Quantocks. It is in this neighbourhood the society calling themselves, or rather their place, 'the Agapemone,' are located. Their establishment, which is supposed to be on rather epicurean principles, offers no particular external sign of luxury, except a magnificent stud of horses, and some handsome equipages, in which the head of the house and his favourites drive about the country, attended by three or four dogs of the Mont St Bernard breed. They have a tasteful conservatory, and a large room devoted to music, and the other rites of their peculiar worship. But whether their domestic arrangements are sociable or socialistic, it is difficult to say; though public opinion, of course, condemns a society who guard their proceedings with jealous secrecy.

THE PEARL OF CAMPAN.

ONE fine morning in autumn, I was rambling through the secluded Valley of Campan, in the Pyrenees, accompanied by the excellent curate of the district, with whom, in the course of my peregrinations, I had become acquainted, and beneath whose hospitable roof I had promised to spend the night. The scenery was wild and lovely beyond description; and having expressed my admiration of it, I added a wish to know something of the inhabitants.

'They have hearts of gold and wills of iron,' said my friend. 'Many a touching and noble instance of generosity and self-denial have I met with amongst them. And, for example, look at this man approaching us.'

He was a fine-looking fellow, of five or six and twenty, with a military air, and dressed in uniform. The lower part of his face was very handsome, and his dark sunburnt complexion suited well with the long moustaches. I could not see his eyes, for the visor of his cap was drawn down so as completely to shade them from the light. Having exchanged a cordial salutation with the curate, he passed on, followed by a huge white dog, with thick fur and enormous paws. The animal

belonged to a breed peculiar to the Pyrenees, and remarkable for their sagacity and faithfulness.

'Now,' said my companion, as soon as the soldier had passed out of hearing, 'while we walk along, I will tell you a true story, of which you have just seen two of the principal characters.'

I prepared to listen with attention, and the curate commenced.

'Juan Trigoyen was born in the heart of these mountains, where the peasant has his choice of following one of two occupations—that of a shepherd, or a hunter. Juan chose the latter, as his father had done before him; and a hazardous pursuit it is. Not merely has the mountain-hunter to scale all but inaccessible precipices, and to brave the fury of famished bears and wolves, but he is constantly exposed to be swept away by a torrent, or buried beneath an avalanche. To this latter peril Juan's father had fallen a victim. Crushed beneath a mass of snow, he perished, leaving his son no other heritage than his dog, his gun, and his grandmother Gertrude, an aged woman, unequal to the task of supporting herself. Juan, at this time a fine lad of eighteen, loved his grandmother tenderly; she had always supplied to him the place of his mother, who had died in giving him birth, and he now, with a courage and resolution beyond his years, undertook the sole charge of their maintenance. He had been early trained to the chase, and success now crowned his efforts. The number of izards, eagles, and bears struck down by his hand, testified the sureness of his foot and the certainty of his aim.

Thanks to the value of these spoils, Gertrude knew no privation; but she trembled for the safety of her beloved child, and often said to him, with tears in her eyes: "Stay at home to-day, Juan; you will perish some time or other, like your poor father; and what should I do left alone, without any one to love in the world?"

Then the lad would answer: "Calm yourself, mother; Providence will watch over me for your sake."

Thus did Juan work hard during the week for his own and his parent's support, and on Sunday I loved to see them entering my little church; Gertrude leaning on the arm of her handsome boy, and both joining in the prayers with the utmost devotion.

Two years passed on, and Juan was returning one day from Bagñères, whither he had gone to dispose of some game. It was winter, and the north wind blew piercingly cold; but the young hunter stepped on briskly, whistling a lively tune. Suddenly a cry of distress struck his ear, but he knew not whence it came.

"On, Caesar!" he cried, trusting to his dog's sagacity; "seek it out, boy!"

The docile creature set off in the direction of a thick pine-grove, and his master followed; the cries became louder, and Juan recognised the voice of a female in distress. He redoubled his speed, still preceded by the dog. At length he reached an open space, and there was Caesar struggling with a wolf, while on the ground lay a woman, with a huge she-wolf in the act of fastening on her neck. With a shout Juan rushed forward, and at the sound the fierce creature raised her head, and fixed on him two eyeballs glowing with rage and hunger. Without a moment's hesitation, the intrepid hunter seized her by the throat with one hand, and thrusting the other into her mouth, grasped her tongue, and dragged it as with an iron vice. After a fearful struggle, he succeeded in dashing the strangled beast on the ground. This done, Juan looked round to see if his faithful ally had need of assistance. No; his antagonist also lay dead, and the hunter had time to attend to the woman, who lay motionless on the ground, having fainted from excess of terror. Her deliverer raised her gently in his arms, put back the rich brown hair that had fallen over her face, and

perceived that she was a young and very lovely girl. Taking a handful of the snow which lay on the ground, he rubbed it on her temples, and then succeeded in putting some small bits of ice into her mouth. By degrees she revived, her eyelids unclosed, and she drew a deep sigh.

"Where am I?" she murmured.

"Safe with a friend."

"It was you, then, who saved me?"

"Rather it was Providence, who was pleased to employ my hand."

She thanked him with a look far more eloquent than words; and then with confiding simplicity, as she still felt weak, asked him to let her lean on his arm as far as her home. "I was going to the town," she said, "to sell some milk, when those dreadful wolves attacked me, upset my pitcher, and, but for your timely aid and that of your good dog, would surely have devoured me."

The conversation thus commenced did not flag. Juan soon learned that Marguerite lived in the hamlet of Campan; that she was an orphan, and had no property save a small cottage, one cow, and some hens. She managed to support herself with the profits of these animals and of her spinning. Her perfect candour and her innocent beauty charmed the honest heart of Juan; he thought that, were he possessed of all the treasures in the world, he would like to lay them at Marguerite's feet. On entering the village, the news of their adventure spread quickly; and it was easy to see, by the consequent excitement, how much the young girl was beloved by her neighbours. Both young and old rushed forth to meet her; Juan was overwhelmed with thanks and praises; nor was poor Cesar by any means forgotten.

"Adieu, Marguerite," said Juan, when he had accompanied her to her cottage-door. "May I sometimes come to see you?"

"To whom should my door be open, if not to my deliverer?" said the young girl innocently, at the same time extending her hand to Juan. He pressed it to his lips, and hastened away.

When he reached home, he found Gertrude very uneasy at his prolonged absence. "Oh, my child!" she cried, "where have you been, and what are those stains of blood on your dress?"

Juan smiled. "Don't be uneasy, mother; this blood is not mine, but that of an enemy I killed." And he told her all that had occurred, not concealing the feelings of admiration and love which he felt for her whom he had rescued.

"Thank God, my child," said the old woman, "that your choice has fallen on so worthy an object. I have often heard the beauty and virtuous industry of Marguerite commended. She is called by her neighbours the Pearl of Campan."

It never occurred to the affectionate grandmother, that the fair girl in question could possibly be insensible to the attractions of her boy; and, indeed, the event proved that she was not far wrong. Marguerite was of too innocent and frank a nature to play the coquette with him who had risked his life for hers, and the preliminaries for their marriage were speedily arranged.

On the morning preceding that on which their bans were to be published, the sound of a drum was heard in the peaceful Valley of Campan; and the prefect of the district proclaimed the drawing of conscripts for the army. Poor Juan! his was amongst the first of the selected names, and at the moment the shock nearly stunned him. However, he had been taught not to shrink from his duty, and having calmly made the needful preparations, he drew his betrothed aside, and said: "Listen to me, Marguerite. You promised to be mine; I am going away for some years, perhaps for ever; it is right that you should be free—I give you back your vow."

"And I," said the girl, "will not take it back. Whether

our next meeting, Juan, will be here or in that better world to which, I trust, we are both looking, I will never marry any one but you."

The young man pressed her hand in silence. "But my mother!" he said at length, while two unwonted tears rolled down his cheeks; "she is old, infirm, unable to work for her support."

"Your mother, Juan," interrupted Marguerite, "is she not henceforth mine? So long as God gives me strength to work, our mother shall not want a home."

And so, with mutual blessings and fond tears, they parted.

Cesar followed his master to the wars, and Gertrude, on the day of Juan's departure, took up her abode in Marguerite's cottage. The old woman managed the domestic affairs, while the young one carried her milk, butter, eggs, and poultry to market. In the evenings, as they both sat at their spinning-wheels, their conversation naturally turned on Juan: "Where is he now?—what is he doing while we are speaking of him?" Sometimes their anxiety was assuaged by the arrival of a letter, filled with hope and tenderness; but at length one came which increased their sorrow. It bore the stamp of Algeria. Juan announced that his regiment had just landed in Africa, and was immediately to march on the town of Zaatcha, where a number of insurgent Arabs had intrenched themselves. Some sharp fighting was expected, as the rebels were known to be desperate. Under this afflicting intelligence, the two women found their only consolation in religion—in committing their dear one to the care of God. Every day, on her way to the town, Marguerite was accustomed to pause for a few minutes at the spot where she had first met her betrothed, and where, during the happy days of their courtship, he had raised a rustic seat; she used to kneel beside that simple memento, and pray fervently, nor did she ever arise and go on her way without feeling strengthened and encouraged.

Every evening, on her return, her first question to Gertrude was: "Has Juan written?" And the old woman would silently shake her head with a despairing gesture, which seemed to imply: "Juan will never write to us again!"

One day, as Marguerite was returning from Bagnères, she was overtaken by a violent thunder-storm. There was no place of refuge nearer than her own cottage; and with her garments dripping, and her eyes nearly blinded by the driving rain, she hastened towards it. What did she see? A blazing lightning-stricken pile, surrounded by a terrified crowd of villagers.

"Mother!" cried Marguerite, darting onwards, "where are you?"

A cry of agony from within the burning cottage was the reply.

"Mother, courage! I'll save, or die with you!" And before the astounded spectators could detain her, she rushed through the flames. A minute, which seemed an age of agonising suspense, elapsed, and Marguerite reappeared, dragging forth her pious burden, and forming with her own body a rampart against the flames. Scarcely had she allowed the old woman to fall into some of the arms ready to receive her, when the heroic girl sunk down herself inanimate.

When she opened her eyes, continued the curate, 'she was in an apartment in my house, whither I had caused her to be carried. Gertrude and I had watched for three days and three nights by her bed, awaiting the moment of returning consciousness. Her first sensation was that of torturing pain in her face. She raised her hand to it, and felt that it was so enveloped in bandages as to leave only the mouth and eyes free. A cry escaped her lips. "Oh, I remember the storm—the flames; I am disfigured for life—is it not so?"

Gertrude and I were silent. It was but too true; the devouring element, leaving her body, protected by her wet clothes, untouched, had seized on her face.

The beauty of feature and delicacy of complexion, which had procured for her her graceful sobriquet, were totally destroyed.

Until the bandages were removed, which the surgeon did not as yet judge it prudent to do, he could not tell the extent of the disfigurement, but that it would be very great was certain. Our silence, and the tears which we could not repress, acquainted the poor child with her misfortune. She raised her eyes to heaven with a touching expression of resignation. "It is Thy will, my God," she said, "but let not Juan see me thus."

"Juan!" repeated Gertrude; "we shall soon embrace him."

"Is he coming?"

"In ten days—see yourself." She handed a letter to Marguerite, which the latter read with eagerness. It was written by the hand of one of his comrades, and informed them that Juan, who had received a severe wound at the siege of Zaatcha, was now convalescent in hospital; had obtained, as a reward for his services, a cross of merit, his discharge, and pension, and would be with them in ten or twelve days at furthest.

Having finished reading the letter, Marguerite fell into a profound reverie, from which neither Gertrude's fond caresses nor my attempts at consolation could arouse her. "Oh, sir," said she at last, "it is not, indeed it is not for its own sake that I value beauty, but—but how can Juan love me when he sees me in this state?" At that moment the surgeon entered, and having felt his patient's pulse, he began silently to remove the bandages. As soon as Marguerite felt that her wounds were exposed, she asked for a mirror.

"Not yet, my child; not to-day," said the doctor. She tried to raise her hands to feel her face. "Hold her arms down," cried the surgeon to the old woman and myself. We did so, involuntarily turning away our eyes from the sight of those swollen and mutilated features, once so lovely.

Marguerite saw and understood our movement. "Is it not so, sir?" she said to me calmly; "will it not be impossible for him to love me?"

Nine days passed on; the wounds were regularly dressed, and were now nearly cicatrised. The tenth day was that of Juan's expected return; but no one ventured to speak of it. Early in the morning, Marguerite rose, and prepared to go out, saying that a walk in the fresh air would do her good. I offered to accompany her.

"No, thank you, sir," she said; "my good mother alone will come with me." And with one hand slightly leaning on Gertrude's arm, while the other held a small package, she went out. They walked towards Juan's rustic seat, but very slowly, for the convalescent was yet very weak.

Arrived there, she knelt down, and after a short silent prayer she turned to Gertrude, and embracing her, said: "Bless your daughter, dear mother, for the last time: you will never see her again."

"What do you mean, my child?"

"The truth. I am going away. You will say good-by for me to him, mother; and tell him that it is my very love for him that forces me to fly."

"But, dear one," said Gertrude, detaining her, "you wrong our Juan; he has a noble heart, and he will love you all the better for these noble scars, when he hears that it was in saving me from a dreadful death you received them."

"He has a noble heart," replied the girl; "and I know that he would marry me, and try to make me happy; but how could I endure his averted looks—his sorrow? No, no; I shall suffer much less in suffering alone."

Just then, a well-known bark was heard, and a large white dog rushed out of the woody path. "Cæsar!" cried Gertrude. "Where is your master?"

"Here he is," replied an agitated voice; and holding

one end of a cord, of which the other was fastened to Cæsar's collar, a soldier appeared. "Mother! are you here? Where is Marguerite? Why don't you come and embrace your poor blind wanderer?"

"Blind!" exclaimed Marguerite; and fixing her eyes on her betrothed, she saw that he was covered with a bandage. I cannot describe the emotions of all three; suffice it to say, that after an incredible number of embraces, Gertrude and her two children returned to my house, and we passed a delightful evening.

Here the curate stopped, and I thought his tale was ended.

"Well," I said, "I suppose the blind warrior and his betrothed—still, in his imagination, blooming in all her youthful charms—were speedily united?"

"They were," he replied. "It was I who married them; but I have somewhat more to tell you of them. Their cottage, by the willing aid of all the villagers, was soon rebuilt, and they removed into it. Their circumstances were very comfortable, and Juan supported his infirmity—caused, he told me, by the explosion of a mine—with the utmost cheerfulness. His tenderness for his wife seemed to increase every day; and yet she was evidently not happy. She became a prey to constant melancholy, and her health and strength visibly declined. Her old friend, the doctor, visited and prescribed for her, but without avail.

"My art is at fault," he said to me. "Her body suffers, but the seat of the disease is her mind. Do you try to discover what the secret which weighs on her may be, or I cannot answer for her life."

Alas! how could I apply the consolations of religion to a case of which the sufferer persisted in keeping me profoundly ignorant? Once she seemed on the point of opening her mind, but Juan entered the room, and she was silent; nor could I ever afterwards induce her to speak freely. Meantime her bodily condition became very precarious; and Juan, who was now aware of her danger, scarcely ever stirred from her bedside. Old Gertrude, as you may suppose, was scarcely less anxious about her.

One evening, when I was in the cottage, the doctor arrived; and having examined his patient, pronounced that unless some powerful reaction took place she could not long survive. How solemn were the moments that succeeded this announcement! Poor Juan grasped convulsively the hand of his wife, while large tears streamed from beneath his bandage.

I began to exhort her on the subject of religion; and when I spoke of the mercy of her Maker, she exclaimed: "Oh, I have great need of mercy, for my conscience is burdened with a heavy load. Listen," she continued, addressing us all, "and tell me whether I can hope for forgiveness."

Grouped around her bed, we waited in silent astonishment. Marguerite had raised herself into a sitting posture; her wasted arms, her disordered hair, her sunken features, her hollow eyes, gleaming with a light like that of a lamp kindling up before it is extinguished for ever, lent an air of indescribable solemnity to the scene. Placing her hand in her husband's, she said: "Juan, you remember, when we separated, the promise which we made of mutual fidelity? My heart was yours, and yours was mine. Well, the terror of losing that heart caused me to commit a grievous sin. I pictured you to myself with shocked, averted looks at the first sight of her who was once named the Pearl; and in the agony, the delirium of the moment, I cried to Heaven: 'Oh, God! either give me back my beauty, or take from him his eyesight!' The moment the selfish, impious prayer was uttered, I bitterly repented, and would fain have recalled it; but too late! Juan! the wish was granted, and I have never known since one moment's happiness."

"What!" cried her husband, "and is this the secret, Marguerite, which is killing you?"

"It is."

"Then live, dearest, and be happy; your prayer was not answered."

And tearing off the bandage which covered his eyes, he fell on his wife's bosom, and clasped her in a long embrace.

It appeared that the blindness which had fallen on Juan was of only a temporary nature. Under the skilful treatment of our friend the surgeon, whom he privately consulted, the power of vision began slowly but surely to return. Having, however, heard from his grandmother the whole history of Marguerite's horror at the idea of his beholding her disfigured face, he generously determined to conceal from her his cure, at least for a time. Now, however, it was suddenly revealed; and was it too late? The doctor, motioning us all away from the bed, took his patient's hand, and felt her pulse; a hopeful smile played on his benevolent lips.

"My friend," said he, turning to me, "the age of miracles has not ceased—Marguerite is cured!"

Here the good man ceased, and after a pause, I asked: "And was Marguerite in reality so very much disfigured?"

"You shall judge for yourself."

We walked on, and soon reached a neat and pretty cottage, covered in front with a luxuriant vine. An old woman sat near the doorway spinning, and placed on a low chair by her side, a young woman was nursing an infant. Her figure was remarkably graceful, and her face, although certainly not handsome, was by no means repulsive. It was even easy to distinguish, amid the seams and scars which marked it, the vestiges of great beauty. There was a touching expression of serene tenderness shed over her features, as she looked on her child, which in my eyes amply compensated for the want of regular comeliness.

The curate advanced. "Good-morning, Marguerite," he said.

"Good-morning, sir," she answered, looking up with a beaming smile.

"How is baby to-day?"

"As well as possible," said the happy mother, holding up, and shewing her nursing's rosy dimpled cheeks.

"Well, Marguerite," said the good old man, taking the innocent little creature in his arms, and kissing its tender forehead, "I could fancy this is yourself as I remember you on the day that I baptised you. Come, the Valley of Campan has not lost its Pearl—it is restored in the person of your lovely little daughter."

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

BESIDES devouring thousands of lives and millions of money, the war has called into existence a host of projectors who have, or fancy they have, discovered just the very plan for enabling soldiers to work all sorts of mischief without coming to harm; for rendering our ships and gun-boats irresistible; for undermining batteries; and making scaling-ladders which cannot be thrown down; in short, for the speediest possible extinction of the Muscovite. And forthwith the plans are sent to the Board of Ordnance, who, overwhelmed with the rapidly accumulating mass of papers, have appointed a committee to sift the whole, and select what may be useful. This committee, which includes the requisite naval and military talent, and an F.R.S. or two, have a precious time of it, so prodigious is the load of rubbish awaiting their judgment. One sanguine schemer proposes to send the Russians out of the Crimea, and so bring the war to an end, with no other offence than to the nostrils. There is nothing so

abundant, as the *Times* remarked a few days ago, as a little turn for mechanical invention; and nothing so scarce as the wit which should prompt the inventors to put their schemes into the fire. The committee find the most difficult part of their task to be, in giving such an answer with rejected communications as shall really satisfy the authors of their worthlessness.

The present year, we are told, is to show us what can be done in practice as well as theory; science is to be called in as well as administrative ability, of which the flashing of the first telegraphic message direct from Balaklava to Downing Street is to be accepted as a favourable instalment. Mr Wheatstone is authorised to consider in what way electricity and optics can be turned to account for destructive purposes. Some experiments have been made in France with a coupled cannon, which, with one breech and touch-hole, fires two shots at the same time: and a new 'self breech loading and priming carbine' having been satisfactorily proved at the School of Musketry at Hythe, is now to be supplied to our cavalry regiments. It weighs 7 pounds 7 ounces, has a barrel 22 inches long, a range of from 150 to 700 yards, and can be fired ten times a minute. Damp, or plunging in water, scarcely affects it: it caps itself; and being easily loaded on horseback, gives to cavalry an advantage almost equal to the Minié rifle.

Science has suffered a great loss within the past month by the death of two of our most distinguished geologists—Mr Greenough, and Sir Henry de la Beche. The latter will long be remembered for the important share he took in the Ordnance Geological Survey of England, the coloured maps of which are now in course of publication, and for his ability and perseverance in forming what has since grown into the Museum of Practical Geology, in Jermyn Street. Could he have a worthier monument? A question has been raised as to his successor, as head of the Museum, and it is believed that Sir Roderick Murchison will be induced to accept the post, with its salary of £1100 a year.

Sir Charles Lyell has published a new edition of his *Manual of Elementary Geology*, which, in the new facts and observations it contains, shews how great and important has been the progress of geology since the former edition was published, but little more than three years ago. We know more about metalliferous deposits, particularly of the gold-bearing alluvium, and of the relations of the older rocks to each other; and by discoveries of fossil remains, we have been able to carry back the existence of animals to periods once thought to be utterly devoid of life. And still as new facts arise, so will the dates of creation recede. 'We must never forget,' says Sir Charles, 'how many of the dates are due to British skill and energy, Great Britain being still the only country in which mammalia have been found in colitic rocks; the only region where any reptiles have been detected in strata as old as the Devonian; the only one wherein the bones of birds have been traced back as far as the London clay. And if geology had been cultivated with less zeal in our island, we should know nothing as yet of two extensive assemblages of tertiary mammalia of higher antiquity than the fauna of the Paris gypsum. . . . How, then, can we doubt, if every area on the globe were to be studied with the same diligence—if all Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia, were equally well known—that every date assigned by us for the earliest recorded appearance of fish, reptiles, birds, and mammals would have to be altered?'

Departing from their custom, and recognising the principle that science is of no country, the managers of the Royal Institution have engaged Dr Du Bois

Reymond, of Berlin, to deliver a course of lectures on Electro-physiology—a subject in which he has made highly interesting researches. His audiences will learn with surprise how much they owe to electricity in their bodily functions and movements, and will hardly be willing to accept the conclusions of a paper lately read to the Royal Society, in which the author contends that muscular contraction is not dependent on the blood, the nerves, or the will, but simply on gravity.

Dr Tyndall continues his inquiry into the 'influence of compression' on magnetic phenomena, and with success. Commenting on some of the unexpected results, Mr Faraday replies to certain objections urged against his own views of magnetic action: he considers it best to wait till they have been more thought of, and till the number of anomalous facts and consequences is increased. 'After a respectful interval,' he pursues, 'I may be induced to put forth such explanations, acknowledgments, or conclusions, as the state of the subject may then seem to render necessary or useful.' Mr Faraday, too, is continuing his *Experimental Researches in Electricity*, of which he has just brought out the third volume. The concluding paragraph is numbered 3362, which will give some idea of the extent of the series. Only those who know what the paragraphs really suggest and reveal, can properly appreciate the significance of so high a number. In quitting the subject of electricity, we may mention that Sir William Snow Harris is appointed protector of the Houses of Parliament: in other words, he is to superintend the fixing of all the lightning-conductors on the stately edifice.

The Panopticon is doing wonders with its colossal electric-machine, in illustration of Mr Grove's remarkable discovery. At a private view, the spectators were amazed by a thunder-clap from the battery, 250 square feet of surface; wires were broken and formed into small balls by the discharge, and in some instances reduced to oxide. In one of the experiments, when the discharge was sent through a long glass tube—a partial vacuum—the fluid, instead of passing in a column, as was expected, appeared as a slow moving ball. Does this explain the globular phenomena sometimes seen during thunder-storms? Those who are interested in galvanic electricity, may now see Professor Callaris's single-fluid battery in action at the same institution.

The astronomers at Marseille have discovered another of the little planets—the thirty-fourth; and M. Luther, at Bilk, near Düsseldorf, a thirty-fifth. At this rate, the Grecian mythology will soon become exhausted of names for the diminutive worlds. Leverrier is about to determine the difference of longitude between the observatories of Brussels and Paris by telegraph; when accomplished, it will be a test of the accuracy of the determination already made between those two places and Greenwich. Sir John Herschel, in a communication to the Astronomical Society, strongly recommends that daily photographs of the sun should be taken, so as to obtain every feature of the great luminary; the object being to increase our knowledge of its physical constitution. The images should be taken on paper or collodionised glass, as many as possible in this country and the United States, and a few from the tropics. A curious effect of sunshine has been observed at Santiago: the observatory is built on a hill of porphyritic rock, and for a long time the telescope was found to shift its position, being generally higher than it ought to have been. At last, by careful observation, it was ascertained that the heat of the sun expanded the rock, and produced a periodical elevation of the mass, and all that was on it.

A triumph of manufacturing skill and ingenuity has been achieved at the Tredegar Ironworks, Monmouthshire, shewing what may be done in the manipulation of iron. A railway bar was rolled 60 feet in length, all

in one piece; and advancing from this success, a second bar has been rolled 85 feet 2 inches long, 75 pounds to the yard, weighing altogether 2180 pounds. It is now astonishing foreigners in the Exhibition at Paris. No wonder, when such bars as these are to be produced, that we hear of fly-wheels of sixty tons, to regulate the movement of the rollers.

The seventh annual Exhibition of Inventions, which has been open for some weeks at the Society of Arts, though not what it might be, yet furnishes evidence of improvement in mechanical arts. The catalogue contains 302 items; among which are stoves and grates for consuming smoke and economising fuel, a steam-hammer, screw-propellers, philosophical instruments, pumps of new construction, a coal-whipping engine, India-rubber springs, improved tools and machinery, &c., all well worth inspection. Some fine specimens of Cornish serpentine were exhibited, and there appears now to be a prospect of this beautiful stone receiving the attention it deserves, as some of the newly-built mansions in Paddington have been decorated with it. We think it probable that the Exhibition in 1856 will shew a much greater advance in inventive ability.

Colonel Cotton, who has long been known as a zealous advocate by tongue and pen of improvements for India, gave an eloquent exposition of his views at a late meeting of the Society: those present found it a most interesting evening. He contends—perhaps with a bias in favour of his own opinion—that our Indian possessions would be more benefited by canals, for irrigation and navigation, than by great trunk-lines of railway. Without a proper supply of water, the people are always liable to famines, and the marvellous fertility of the country remains undeveloped. The colonel proposes to improve rivers; to clear out the ancient canals, which have become choked up by long neglect; and to dig new ones. The region watered by the Godavery alone, if properly irrigated, would produce more cotton than we want. At present, 30,000 tons are sent down every year to the sea, a distance of 400 miles, on bullocks' backs; whereas if the stream were made navigable, the supply would be unlimited, and the cost of transport a trifle. Tanjore was cited as an instance of what might be done with even moderate means. In that district, an annual sum of L.8000 has been spent on public works for the past forty years, and the irrigation kept up, though imperfectly; and the consequence is, that the population has increased from 800,000 to 1,500,000, and the yearly revenue from L.320,000 to L.500,000. Moreover, when other provinces have been suffering from the terrible famines which sweep off the inhabitants by hundreds of thousands, Tanjore has always had enough and to spare. Admitting that the results would not be everywhere equally favourable, we yet see that the gold of Australia and California would be as nothing compared with the wealth to be derived from watering the plains of India.

Colonel Cotton holds, and we agree with him, that if we conquer a country, it becomes our duty, not less than our policy, to take care that our rule shall not be an exchange for the worse. We are bound to see that the interests of the people do not suffer, by neglect on our part of the obvious means that tend to their welfare. Besides water-courses, the colonel would have canals navigable for boats, by which produce might be transported, and light tram-ways as feeders. The beginning has been made. There is a tram-way of ninety miles from Negapatam to Trichinopoly, and shorter lines in other parts of the country. These are independent of the great lines of railway, to which we have more than once called attention. In about three years more, there will be 4000 miles of connected water-communication in the Madras presidency alone; and in Bengal, the canal connecting the Ganges and Jumna measures, with its branches, 850 miles. The

delta of the Godavery—1,200,000 acres—is to be irrigated; a dam, to cost L.300,000, is being built for the purpose, with an absolute certainty that the profit will be thirtyfold. In that district, wheat can at times be bought for 8d. a bushel, and cotton for less than 1d. a pound. We have dwelt on this subject, thinking it of the highest importance to England and to India, whether considered in a moral or commercial point of view.

Some discussion has been going on at the Geographical Society and elsewhere on the rivers of Africa, and the opportunities they afford for opening up communication with the interior, especially from the eastern coast. We may expect to hear of exploring expeditions to that quarter. While touching upon Africa, it gives us great pleasure to report that the news of Dr Barth's death has been contradicted. The rumour was raised, it is said, by the monarch of Bornou, as a pretext for the appropriation of a dépôt of supplies which had been established for the doctor's use. Few but will rejoice at the safety of the adventurous traveller. There is again a talk of a canal across the Isthmus of Suez: certain French engineers are determined to commence the work, if they can get the necessary powers from the Egyptian and Turkish governments. And as bearing on the question of the East, we may add that a society has been formed in Würtemberg for sending Jews to Palestine, and settling them on freehold lands, with guarantees against injustice and oppression from the local authorities.

The system of meteorological observations in France has now so far advanced, that, as in this country, the state of the weather is announced from all parts to the Observatory at Paris by telegraph. A daily map of the wind and weather is drawn up, and already the means of comparison are such as to indicate a greater amount of ozone in the atmosphere at Lyon than at Paris; and that the increase or diminution of ozone has something to do with the rise and fall of epidemics. The veteran Humboldt writes to express his hope, that pains will be taken to make the observations efficient, so much importance does he attach to the results. In Austria, the state of the weather is flashed from seventy-six cities and towns to Vienna every day; and Spain is about to establish a series of weather-stations; so we shall soon know more than at present of the meteorology of Europe. The Académie offer a prize of 3000 francs for the best paper on the mercurial thermometer, and the corrections to be applied under different circumstances, for the determination of the real temperature from its apparent indications.

Our Allies are carrying out still further the combined vapour system of propelling steam-boats. *La France*, fitted on this system, burnt 300 tons of coal on the voyage from Marseille to Kamiesch, while the *Hydaspes*, an ordinary steamer, burnt 700 tons. In the combined system, one of the engines is impelled by vapour of ether, produced by the condensation of the steam, and only one fire is necessary. A vessel thus propelled, has been running across the Mediterranean to Algiers ever since 1853. One or two more have been launched, and others are being built.

Kreil, of Vienna, has invented an instrument for recording the force and duration of earthquake shocks. In few words, it is a pendulum, free to move in any direction, but not to swing back again after the move. Connected with it is a clock-work apparatus, keeping in motion a coil of paper, on which, when all is quiet, a continuous pencil-mark is produced. But no sooner does a shock take place, than the line is broken; and according to the number and length of the breaks, such is the number and duration of the shocks.

By an unlucky slip of the pen in the 'Month' (No. 65), we were made to say, that Sir H. Young's proposed Australian railway was to pass through Adelaide on its way from Sydney to Melbourne, when,

through Melbourne to Adelaide was what should have been said. We are now informed that the scheme is one not likely to be realised till the colonies are some generations older—if then.

THE GARDEN CHAIR.

A PHOTOGRAPH.

A PLEASANT picture, full of meanings deep:
Old Age, calm sitting in the July sun,
On withered hands half-leaning; feeble hands,
That after long life-labours, light or hard—
The girlish broderies, the marriage-ringed
And household duties; the sweet cradle cares—
Have dropped into this quiet-folded ease
Of fourscore years. How peacefully the eyes
Face us! Contented, unregretful eyes,
That seem to look back on the weary way
Once traversed, saying: 'Thus best!' Eyes now so near
Unto their mortal closing, that we deem
They needs must pierce direct through Life's thick maze
As eyes immortal do.

Then, Youth. She stands
Under the roses; with elastic foot
Poised to step forward; eager-eyed: half-grave
Under the mystery of the unknown To-come,
Yet longing for its coming. Firm prepared
(So say the lifted head and close sweet mouth)
For any future: yet the dreamy Hope
Throned on her girl's brow whispers tremblingly:
'Surely they err who say that Life is hard;
Surely it shall not be with me as these.'
God knows. He only.

And so best, thou child,
Thou woman-statured, sixteen-years-old child:
Best thus to meet the impenetrable Dark
With brave, outlooking, calm, expectant eyes,
Under thy roses. Bud and blossom thou
Rose-like—unfearing: being planted safe—
Whether for gathering or for withering—safe
In the King's garden.

BLACK EYES.

The task of perambulating the rookeries of London has been undertaken by many philanthropists, and among them the editor of the *Builder*, who in a small pamphlet recently published describes his observations. Speaking of the neighbourhood of Marlborough Street Police Court, he states, that near to Berwick Street 'exists a little known, but badly built, and badly inhabited collection of houses,' and says, 'that the people of this district were and are still the constant plagues of the police, and that some of the public-houses are of the worst description;' and as an illustration of the pugnacious and pugilistic dispositions and practices of the colony here located, he gives the following copy of a printed announcement, placed in a chemist's shop-window close by:—'**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN** are respectfully informed that **BLACK EYES** are effectually concealed on moderate terms. It is warranted that the preparation is not injurious to the skin.'—*Ragged School Union Magazine*.

DETERMINATION.

'The longer I live,' says Sir T. F. Buxton, 'the more I am certain that the great difference between men—between the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant—is energy, invincible determination, a purpose once fixed in, and then death or victory. That quality will do anything that can be done in the world; and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities, will make a two-legged creature a man without it.'

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